Fashion Gossip from the Home of the Mode

MID-SEASON NOTES OF THE PREVAILING STYLES FROM GAY PARIS.

NEVER was dress more entirely feminine and seductive. Pale-colored satin-faced cloth gowns are inserted with real lace, while shaped flounces trimmed with narrow bands of sable fur blend summer and winter in harmonious symphonies.

Black itself assumes a festive appearance with its application of white kid embroidered with black chenille and gold. Altogether, the winter dresses are so dainty and bright in appearance that it is difficult not to believe we are gliding into spring.

As time goes on the bands of fur will grow narrower and gradually disappear, but the faint "cendre de rose" pink, the pale orchid mauves and other pretty colored cloths still reign supreme. Zibeline cloths with long-haired surfaces, loosely woven "natte" fabrics, luminous poplins and velvety "Peau de Cygne" silks will be worn throughout the remainder of the winter and spring.

Picot velvet closely resembles the old "terry velvets" of long ago; and panne, if no longer in great vogue, still holds its own.

Many of the new skirts are double or triple, some are slightly draped. For general wear, the all-round short skirt, cut a sensible walking length, is much worn. Several new skirts have appeared, and they are all worthy of attention—being graceful in wear and generally becoming.

Velvet and velveteen blouses for wearing with cloth skirts are much shown, and it scarcely matters of what a blouse is now composed—lace enters inevitably into its trimming.

Fancy and plain flannel blouses of every imaginable variety hold sway, and lace insertion is the favorite trimming; while, on the other hand, tight-fitting and long-basqued tailor-cut bodices are much in demand for those of elegant and svelte form.

Teagowns are certainly possible for all purposes, but if made entirely of real lace over colored chiffon and trimmed with pink chiffon roses, one would want a king's ransom to pay for them.

Sleeves have grown quite visibly, being now put in quite full from the shoulders, and often caught in three puffs Coat sleeves are very wide, quite the old world "Manche Pagode." The long opera mantles always affect this style of sleeve.

A pretty conceit are the embroideries of silk and wool, which are enormously worn in Paris. Coarse Russian guipure ficelle is worn in collars on flannel blouses, or to trim teagowns, the best kind having medallions of net.

Velvet dresses are covered with cloth applique, or a lace work of cloth. Corduroy, but a glorified corduroy velvet is a favorite material; it has spots, stripes, floral chine designs, and is really charming in the new mouse-gray, reseda and heliotrope shades. Corduroy is very durable in wear, besides being a warm material, but it is not suited to stout women.

Fashion makers have decreed that the decline of the bolero is at hand, and quite a variety of house jackets, teacoats and basqued blouses are cropping up. This is typical of the times. No fashion, however charming, is allowed to remain with us long. Novelty after novelty swells the tide of reckless expenditure, of which sensible women will do well to beware.

Old brocades, worn and faded with age, are outlined with gold cord or chenille, studded with jewels or incrusted with real lace until scarce any of the original material is to be seen.

The mixtures in trimmings are truly wonderful. Lace is embroidered in black chenille and studded with medallions of hand-painted cretonne, outlined in gold. Embroideries on tulle have reached an acme of perfection; they are spangled, jeweled and tufted with floss silk. Cloth is studded with gold and silver nailheads. Kid is embroidered in bands to form yokes and belts.

Lace, old and new, adorns everything—muffs are frilled with it, lace ruffles fall over the hands, and lovely creamy lace peeps out wherever possible.

Stocks and ruffles are indispensable with the Louis Quinze coats, which are not as much worn as they might be, simply because if a wearer has not a style of her own she is apt to look dowdy in them.

Marabout is a delightful feather fur, and the new neck arrangements of marabout are a sort of flat capelet edged with little tails, with long stole ends in front.

Fur also appears on hats and toques—a few sable tails, a band of ermine, some real lace and soft panne roses make a fetching hat.

A favorite but expensive trimming for beaver and soft felt hats is a swathed drapery of white tulle or chiffon, on to which has been sewn tails of ermine. This has a very pretty effect, but is extravagant, as most modern styles.

Velvet flowers and foliage are lovely and soft for trimming toques and hats, and, moreover, if well made, are durable and economical. Most of the French specimens are deliciously perfumed, a tiny wad of scented wool being artfully concealed in the center of each flower.

Velvet violets in dark and mauve shades, and arranged in market bunches, adorn pale gray beaver and rough felt hats. Turban, toreador and tricorne shapes are all favorite wear.

Crepe de chine will have a long sway for evening wear, beside the endless hand-painted gauze, lisse and chiffon materials. Crepe de chine is often kilted into empire dresses, and a lovely Greek style of gown is popular, trimmed with hand embroidery in designs of hop leaves, or laurel; or red currants and grapes with gold-leaved foliage.

TWO GOOD SPECIMENS OF THE WINTER OUTDOOR GOWNS.

One is in gray snowflake tweed, piped with light gray and finished prettily with little groups of silver buttons. The hat worn with it is a gray felt, trimmed with black velvet and a buckle of silver. Black velvet is used also for collar and cuffs on the gown. The other gown is of black velvet, trimmed with mohair braid which serves also to decorate the high stock collar and cuffs, and forms wide revers.

A FASHIONABLE DINNER GOWN.

This is of black and white embroidered tulle, ornamented with incrustations of Chantilly lace, rows of ribbon and designs in black and velvet. Large guipure collar, with pompadour applications.

Bathing the Face in Winter.

Don't wash the face in hot water during the winter in the daytime. The skin will become cracked and dry even in passing through the house.

THE HOUSEHOLD

THE WOMAN AT HOME.

Her Influence Is the Chief and Essential Thing in Making Family Life Perfect.

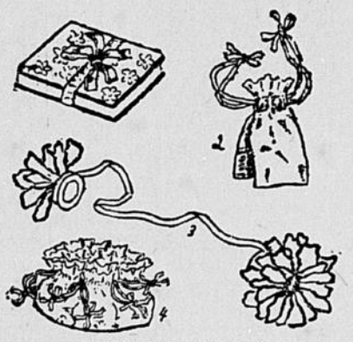
There is no place where the graces of true womankind shine out more conspicuously than in the common daily intercourse of the family. Patience, gentleness, tender sympathy, love and forbearance here come into play with a force and influence felt in no other place. Here those virtues, which have their source in the Divine nature, find their most congenial atmosphere. Let them be lacking, or any of them, and the harmony is broken, and peace and joy depart. It is not to be understood that the happiness of the family relation does not also depend in a large measure upon the character of the husband and the father, but we insist only that the influence of the wife and mother here is the chief and most essential thing. The home is, primarily, what she makes it. It is her domain, her throne of power. If she chooses to neglect her duties at the behest of society, or because of other outside interests, the home suffers from her absence, and the family loses all that charm and brightness which her presence should infuse. There is danger, we apprehend, in these days of progress and "reform," particularly in the matter of "woman's rights," of undervaluing the influence and character of the family life. It is sometimes talked of as a matter of small consequence in comparison with that so-called wider sphere outside of home duties, to which many are inspiring. But let the truth be emphasized, that the mothers of to-day hold the levers of the world's to-morrow. Let impurity, discord and dissension enter the homes of the people, let the family life be corrupted, and disease and death will fasten itself upon the vitals of the republic, and its days will be numbered. Domestic happiness underlies national strength and prosperity, and the nearer we approach to the ideal home the less we shall have to fear for the future. — Leslie's Weekly.

SIMPLE FANCY WORK.

How to Make a Number of Little Articles for the Dresser and Traveling Bag.

Fig. 1 shows a very convenient little article for use in traveling, and it is also ornamental enough for my lady's dainty dresser. It is called a handkerchief press and is made of two pieces of stiff cardboard four inches square, covered on one side with silk of a solid color and on the other with a pretty flowered pattern. Wadding and sachet powder are used. The coverings are overhanded together and the two covers are held together with an elastic band covered each side with inch-wide ribbon stitched together on the edges. Twice the length of elastic should be allowed for the ribbon covering, that it may be quite full. Sew a graceful bow of the ribbon on the top.

A double bag, one side for opera glasses and the other for the handkerchief, is shown at Fig. 2. Three or four-inch wide stiff satin or flowered ribbon is used. Fold together so the two ends will extend beyond the center 2½ inches. Turn back ends, hem and stitch again one-half inch above hemming for a draw. Use narrow ribbon for draw strings.



EASY FANCY WORK.

A cork protector for the large wooden needles so much used in knitting shawls is Fig. 3. A brass ring a little smaller than diameter of largest end of cork is crocheted full with s c in a pretty shade of green silk or silkateen. Make four rows of s c, then change silk to color of flower desired. Be careful now to make work fit cork. In fifth round after every other s c, ch 15 or more if longer petals are liked, and catch with s c in next stitch. Do the same in every succeeding round; if too full, make loops in every other round. After completing a round, go back and fill each loop with s c. Leave a few rounds in center of top plain, making them with yellow silk and also narrowing a little to fit cork. Connect the two corks with inch-wide green ribbon a little longer than needles.

Six bags in one (Fig. 4) for sewing saves mixing of spools and the many articles that so constantly tangle in the work basket. The bottom piece is a hexagon of stiff cardboard covered with flowered silk or silkateen, the edges overhanded together, and to each of the sides is attached a small bag whose width is the same as one side of the hexagon. The small bags are made of the same material lined with a contrasting or harmonizing color. Places are made for draw strings and each bag is drawn up separately with two lengths of baby ribbon tied in a little bow at both ends.—Orange Judd Farmer.

NEW AMERICAN SINGER.

French Critics Say That Bessie Abbott Pickens Surpasses the Immortal Patti.

Bessie Abbott, the American vaudeville actress who left the stage four years ago to study for the opera on the advice of Jean de Reszke, has just made her debut as a grand opera star in Paris, and has created a great commotion in music circles there. Her Juliette is described as the most perfect ever sung in Paris, not excepting even Patti. The critics are unequivocal in their praise, and the success of the former vaudeville actress in grand opera is assured. Miss Abbott is a member of the Pickens family, of South Carolina. She went on the stage seven years ago as one of the three "Abbott sisters," and for three years sang "I Don't Want to Play in Your Yard" and other popular songs, which were first sung by her. She has a beautiful face and figure, and, in America, was the favorite of the three sisters.

BESSIE ABBOTT PICKENS.

Great teachers, such as Manouery, Julians and Fugure, accord warm and earnest praise to the young American.

Manouery says: "Miss Abbott is the best Juliette I have ever heard. Moreover, with the exception of Patti, she is the only prima donna who has ever been able to render the part as written in the original score. That is to say, Miss Abbott sang the score of Juliette in G, which requires her to put her full voice on high D, the attack of which was absolutely perfect. It should be remembered that neither Melba nor Eames ever attempted to sing the score of Juliette in G, but did so in F, a full tone lower than Miss Abbott sang it."

Pierre Gailhard, the director of the opera, states: "In my opinion Miss Bessie Abbott is the most perfect Juliette that has ever sung in Paris, and in saying this I do not even except Patti. Miss Abbott's compass is most remarkable, ranging from B below the line to G above the line, or high G."

After Miss Abbott completed the first phrase of the score of Juliette at the opera Gailhard ran up to her and kissed her on the cheek and exclaimed: "My dear child, your triumph is assured."

Miss Abbott replied: "Why, I have scarcely begun to sing yet." Gailhard rejoined: "O, you have won the ear of the public, and you are a success now, no matter what you may do."

After the performance Gen. Porter, the ambassador, wrote her a note stating that it was the most remarkable debut he had even attended. Among those who expressed themselves most enthusiastically and most unequivocally in admiration of Miss Abbott's voice is James Gordon Bennett, who is of a disposition not easily moved by music, but who has surprised his friends by his keen, accurate and eager praise of the young American singer.

As much inaccurate information has appeared in French papers in regard to Miss Abbott it may be stated that she was born at Riverside, in northern New York, the country seat of the Pickens family, of South Carolina, and on her mother's side is a grandniece of the late Archbishop Benson, of Canterbury, and traces her lineage from the Abbotts of Abbottsford. She was educated at a convent and at St. John's private school in New York city. Jean de Reszke, whom she met in England, persuaded her to give up ballad singing and study for opera.

Miss Abbott says her success is due to her teaching under Mme. Freda Ashforth and M. Fidele Koenig, chef de chant of the Paris opera. Capoul gave her lessons in stage deportment. To sum up, the verdict of Paris is that Miss Abbott's success is assured, and the only thing she needs is to study the dramatic side of her profession, which at present is her weak point.

Prunes Don't Need Soaking.

Miss Parloa is the authority for reversing the long-cherished tradition of most housekeepers that prunes should be soaked several hours, or even over night, to prepare them acceptably for cooking. Instead, this well-known expert teaches that the fruit should be washed carefully in tepid water and allowed to stand in it two or three minutes to swell. Wash in a second water and put on at once in a saucepan with 1½ cupfuls of cold water to one cupful of prunes. Simmer slowly for 2½ hours. No sugar is needed, as, cooked in this way, the natural sweetness of the fruit is brought out. Other dried fruits need soaking.

Test for Indigo Blue.

To guard against impure indigo blue test it. Make a solution of it in water and add to it some soda. If it turns reddish it is prussian blue and to be avoided, for it is a compound of iron which becomes decomposed by the contact of soap and soda and makes iron molds.

Captain Jinks as Played By Ethel Barrymore

It Is a Bright, Clean and Enjoyable Comedy, With Many a Laugh In It.

CAPT. JINKS takes us back to the days of 30 years ago, the days of the Grecian bend—worse even than our modern kangaroo walk—to the chignon, and to the bustle of decided prominence and length. The costumes, which to us seem perfectly ridiculous, are one of the amusing features of this laughter-moving play; each new character appearing on the stage provoking, by dress and gait, and manner, the audience to irrepressible mirth.

But Miss Barrymore, who is so deliciously pretty and girlish, notwithstanding her outlandish clothes, continues a wonderfully charming piece of femininity. In the last act, in which she wears a white gown that billows all about her, she is a picture one will not soon forget.

The curtain rises disclosing a wharf in New York and the gangplank of a ship just in from England. It is a rainy October day. An Irish policeman, a mighty good representative of the class, walks about on his beat; a sharp-faced newsboy is on the ground; a reporter, in light trousers and a peculiarly cut long coat and with a peculiarly formed hat tilted on the back of his head, nervously paces to and fro with umbrella raised. Over all there is an air of expectancy. Presently, other reporters join the first one, and an excited consultation ensues. The audience discovers that all are lying in wait for the appearance of Mme. Trentoni, a famous prima donna coming over on American conquest bent. The whole of Manhattan is eager to bid her welcome.

Among others the military. We hear the familiar bars of the old song, "Capt. Jinks, of the Horse Marines," and in walk, arm in arm, three merry gentlemen in scarlet uniform. While waiting for Mme. Trentoni to appear these young gallants kill time as best they may. They match coins, they attitudinize, and finally they indulge in a wager of rather questionable taste. One of them is hard up and put to it to retrieve his fortunes. He makes a bet with Capt. Jinks that the latter will not be able to arrive at love-making with the fair prima donna in the next seven days. Capt. Jinks, not given to taking a dare, wagers that he will, and gives his I. O. U. for $1,000 to his companion. Which, as it very properly should, later causes the captain several miserable hours.

Presently the above characters accommodatingly leave the stage to make way for a private interview between Mr. Policeman and a customs house officer in civilian's clothes. The latter remarks to the former that Mme. Trentoni is said to have brought over with her a very extensive wardrobe, and that they must both be on the alert. Furthermore, if anyone attempts to bribe the policeman, this officer is to give two long whistles and the customs official will come at once to the scene.

They leave the stage, and in comes the crowd of reporters with a huge bouquet, which is to be presented to the prima donna "with the compliments of representatives of the press of New York." A mischievous boy, observing the bouquet, counts on some fun and announces: "Yere comes Mme. Trentoni. Make way!"

The reporters, with a bound, reach the gangplank just in time to see a female of generous amplitude descend. The spokesman at once makes his complimentary remarks and with a flourish presents the offering. The female, much flustered, accepts it coyly and with difficulty manages to grasp it, one arm and hand being employed in holding a small lapdog. After the lady has gushingly given thanks to the kind gentlemen, they discover they have been imposed upon, have presented their precious bouquet to Mme. Trentoni's elderly companion.

Soon the prima donna presents herself, as pretty as woman could be, in the little pancake of a hat that she wears, and at once, according to advice received from Col. Mapleson, her manger, makes herself agreeable to the gentlemen of the press. She tells them that she hopes they will like her, and they respond with ardor and as one man: "O, yes"

When the military gentlemen come, each with a floral gift, she is more reserved, a trifle surprised, but also equal to this occasion. She sends two of them off to exercise her dogs, and to the third, Capt. Jinks, she shows that she considers their welcome to her somewhat informal, not to say impudent. Capt. Jinks, impressed with her dignity, manner and beauty, apologizes for his and his friends' indiscretion, and asks that he be allowed to make amends. In the conversation that follows the captain proves himself so manly and deferential Mme. Trentoni is mollified and grants him permission to call on her that afternoon at her hotel. The customs officials rudely break in on their tete-a-tete, and the prima donna becomes concerned for the safety of her many boxes. Capt. Jinks assures her he will be delighted to look after them for her, and Mme. Trentoni, companion and dog enter a carriage and disappear from sight. The prima donna, sitting in the carriage, surrounded by flowers, makes a very pretty picture, smiling and bowing to the captain, and calling out: "This afternoon at four."

ETHEL BARRYMORE.

But at four the dougthy captain is otherwise engaged. As he was about to place a bill in the hand of the deceitful policeman with a whisper in regard to letting Mme. Trentoni's boxes slip through, two low whistles sounded, and the curtain went down on Jinks struggling in the hands of the customs house confederates.

Two weeks are supposed to have elapsed between the first and second acts. In that time Mme. Trentoni and Capt. Jinks have made great strides in their acquaintance, and we soon find ourselves treated to some interesting love-making. The lady accepts the gentleman with little of coy hesitation, but they get small time for philandering, as a hotel parlor is a bad place for that sort of thing. All through the play, just as the captain and his lady-love are about to embrace, in will rush her manager, or her companion, or his whilom friends, or a bellboy with ice water. All of which, of course, adds to the general hilarity.

But the villain enteres. The whilom friends conspire to ruin Capt. Jinks, chances with Mme. Trentoni. They tell her foster-father of the bet and show Jinks' I. O. U. Of course the foster-father and the girl are very indignant and break off with the captain.

The third act shows us the prima donna on her return to the hotel after her very triumphant "first night." Dressed in gala attire, her room full to overflowing with flowery trophies, she moves about dejected, heartbroken. She refuses to go to the supper given in her honor, to which Gen. Grant has already arrived. All she asks is to be left alone. At last they leave her. She goes about and idly looks at the floral emblems, until her interest is aroused by finding in each one she handles a note from Capt. Jinks, imploring, demanding, that she allow him to explain. Of course she does, and of course she forgives him. The curtain goes down on the happy pair arm-in-arm, going out to join the distinguished people in the banquet room.

THE ASTROLOGER.